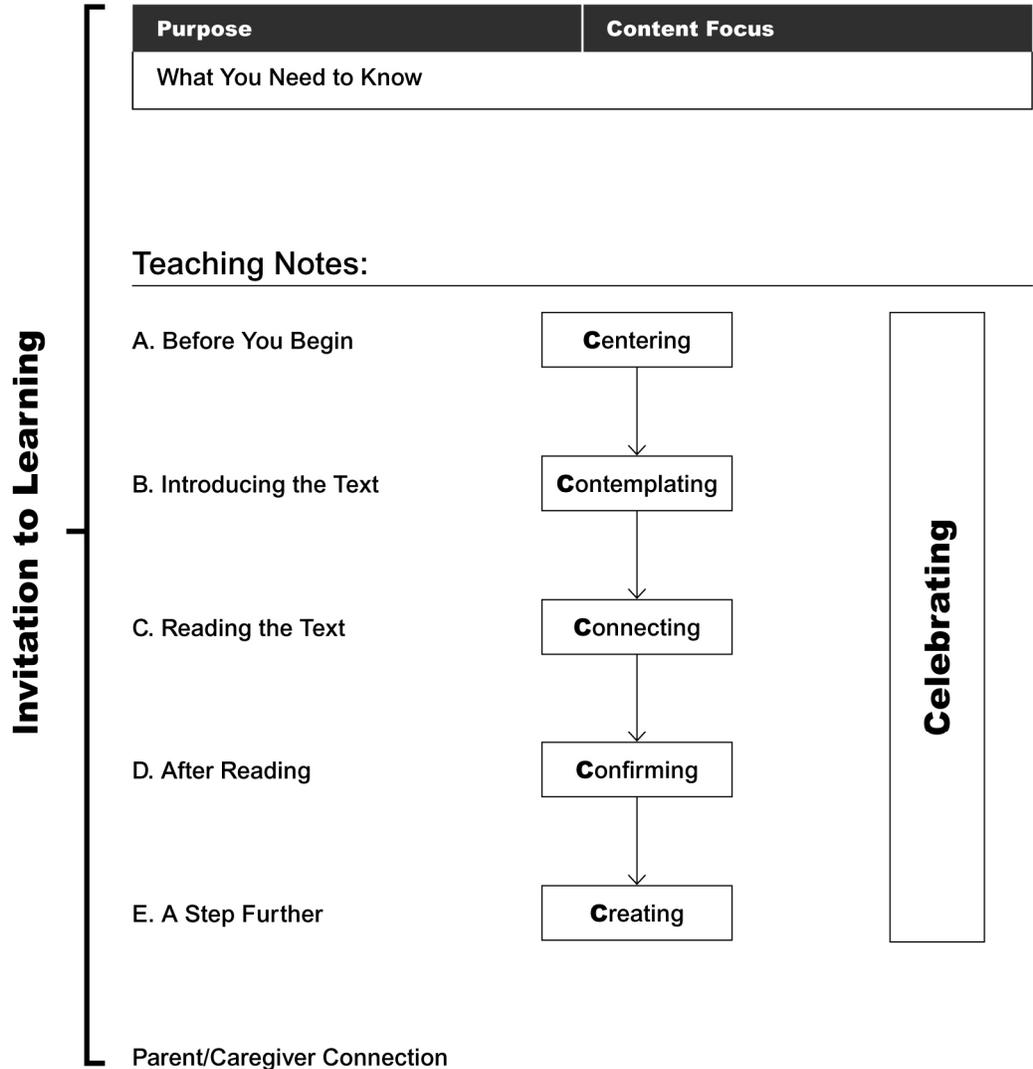


Elements of the Invitations to Learning



Instead of using the familiar term “lesson plans,” we have elected to refer to the teaching notes as **Invitations to Learning**. We feel that, as with any invitation, it is a privilege to be invited to exercise your brain and explore new skills and behaviours that may change the way you and your students think, feel, and act in terms of positive mental health.

Each Invitation to Learning begins with an overview that lists

- **Purpose:** An overview of the overarching goals for the Invitation
- **Content Focus:** The major topics of mental health and literacy addressed
- **What You Need to Know:** Indexed to the Content Focus, providing helpful background knowledge and preparation for the teacher

The overview is followed by the Teaching Notes which are organized as 6 “C’s.”

Teaching Notes: Let’s “C”!

A. Before You Begin: CENTERING—“*Am I ready to learn?*”

- Students are prepared for the learning experience through activities that quiet the mind and alert the senses. Techniques such as deep belly breathing, mindful awareness activities, and attentive listening are used.

B. Introducing the Text: CONTEMPLATING—“*What is this text about and why is it important to me?*”

- Students meet the text and draw on prior knowledge and experiences.

C. Reading the Text: CONNECTING—“*What do I already know and what do I need to know?*”

- Students read and make connections between the text and their own life experiences, the experiences of others, other texts, and some of their own questions and interests.
- Mindfulness of social, emotional, and physical well-being is a common thread throughout.

D. After Reading—Reflecting About the Text: CONFIRMING—“*How do I practise what I have learned?*”

- Skills-based activities and higher-level thinking opportunities help students assimilate new strategies and ways to address positive mental health through important meaning-making and communication skills.

E. A Step Further—Additional Learning Activities: CREATING—“*What are some other ways I can use what I have learned?*”

- Students transfer learning through activities that span the curriculum.

Throughout the Learning Experience: CELEBRATING—“*I can ...*”

- Metacognitive activities help students express what they now know and share their accomplishments with others.
- Celebration helps to promote confidence, efficacy, self-regulation, competence, and self-concept.

Each Invitation concludes with a section called **The Parent/Caregiver Connection**. Here, activities are suggested to help parents stay informed about what students are learning and to keep the conversations going in students' home lives. Some Invitations include a Home Connection Letter specific to the text.

A Note About Reading Levels

You will notice suggested “approximate” reading levels provided for each text at the top of each Invitation.

There is much discussion about the use of suggested reading levels. Many teachers find comfort in knowing that a text has been recommended for a specific reading level so that they can make choices based on where their students fall on the continuum of reading ability. This can be particularly helpful for new teachers, teachers of ELL, or those addressing other forms of differentiation as a guide for selection of texts.

Equally, there is concern from many teachers that, due to the variety of academic levels that exist in each classroom, it would be impossible to select educational material that would address the individual needs of every child.

Therefore, we have provided you with this information to use as a guide only. You know your students best—their backgrounds, their interests, their challenges, and their language abilities. In *Well Aware* the variety of activities, the assisted reading strategies, the open-ended discussions, the guided reading, and the variety of grouping strategies all provide you with ways to make every text accessible to a broad range of students.

Assessment

Assessment is an ongoing, cumulative process that involves observation, interaction, questioning, sampling, responding, and feeling. For the teacher it means knowing the student, what the student knows already and wants or needs to learn. For the student, self-assessment—and the metacognition that is part of it—develops his or her capacity to become an independent, autonomous learner who can set personal goals. *Well Aware* gives particular support to these elements of the assessment picture with an emphasis on talk and reflection.

Celebration is an important part of assessment. It plays a significant role in helping students to develop the confidence to explore new ideas, strategies, and behaviours. Each student in the classroom needs opportunities to experience success in his or her own way. **Line Master 1: Observations for Assessment** offers general suggestions to help you track students' experiences with the texts and activities in *Well Aware*.



www.pearsoncanada.ca/
wellaware

Line Master 1

You may take advantage of opportunities to assess learning outcomes in language, health, character education, and other areas of your curriculum using observation and assessment tools you conventionally use for these purposes. Remember, however, the importance of debriefing conversations; asking students about what they are feeling, wondering about, and connecting to; and setting new goals.

Please Note

Well Aware **does not provide assessment suggestions and tools for mental health.** Please consult the professionals attached to your community of learners if you have concerns related to the mental health of your students.

The purpose of *Well Aware* is to use critical literacy skills and oral language to open the doors to appropriate, meaningful, and relevant discussion about mental health.